

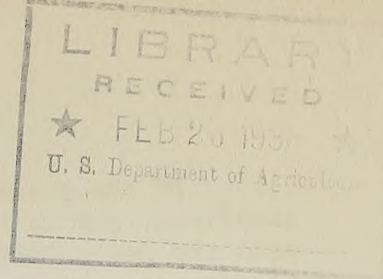
Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.9
755R

HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

Answers to Meat Canning Questions



A radio talk by Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC stations, Monday, February 3, 1936.

--oo00oo--

MR. SALISBURY: Miss Van Deman, before I give you the freedom of the microphone today, I have a confession to make to you and to the women of this audience.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, confession's said to be good for the soul.

MR. SALISBURY: It's about your mail. I can't say I've been reading it this time. If I had I couldn't have kept up my own job these last two weeks. I've just been keeping an eye on it. I had no idea so many people would write to you for those directions for canning meat. Everybody in your office must have had to turn to and address envelopes.

MISS VAN DEMAN: That's about it. And if we've overlooked any questions in our haste to get the material mailed out quickly, I hope nobody will hold it against us. Before answering the letters I've taken them down to Mabel Stienbarger and checked against her careful laboratory records and her experience in canning meat.

For instance, there have been a lot of queries about what size of pressure cooker is best to use in home canning. I remember especially one letter from a Vermont homemaker telling about a most disappointing experience last summer with a small sized cooker. Despite all she could do the pressure kept fluctuating rapidly and it was impossible to hold it constant.

There were probably several reasons for this but one of them was undoubtedly the small size of the cooker. For canning purposes, it is well not to use a cooker smaller than the 18-quart size. The 18-quart cooker will hold 8 pint glass jars or 14 No. 2 tin cans.

Or if you are going to can very much meat or many non-acid vegetables, such as beans and peas and corn, you may find the 25- or 30-quart size of pressure cooker even more convenient. Then you can process 16 or 19 No. 2 tin cans at a time. With one of these larger cookers, you'll find that it's much easier to keep the pressure at the point you want it, than with a small cooker, say a 10-quart size.

And to use a pressure canner successfully, you need to understand the principle of it and the function of every part - the pressure gauge, the petcock, and the safety valve. Read carefully every word of the printed directions that come with the cooker.

(over)

If the pressure gauge should get out of order, and that does happen sometimes, get in touch with the manufacturer right away. You may need to send the gauge back to the factory for checking. Since the household type of pressure cooker is rarely equipped with a thermometer, the pressure gauge is the only way you can tell what the temperature is inside the cooker. Ten pounds pressure is equivalent to a temperature of 240 degrees Fahrenheit. And 15 pounds to 250 degrees.

And that reminds me of the questions about oven canning. They still keep coming. Why don't you recommend canning meat in the oven, several letters have asked since the talk two weeks ago.

Well, the answer is, simply because in the oven you can't get the food in the cans hot enough to kill those troublesome bacteria. They are regular old die-hards. Even though the oven thermometer registers 250 or 275 degrees, that does not mean that the food inside the jars is that hot. As a matter of fact, the food is very little if any hotter than 212 degrees - that is, just about the boiling point of water. That isn't hot enough to sterilize canned meat in a reasonable length of time. But with the steam pressure cooker, you can run the temperature up quickly to 250 degrees. As I said a moment ago and then you can process your cans of meat in a fairly short time.

With all this cold weather, I know a lot of your home-butchered meat has frozen, and maybe you are wondering as one Montana homemaker did whether this frozen meat is all right to can. She wrote that she had a whole beef frozen, waiting to be used in some way.

In general it's better not to let meat freeze before canning it. But if a cold snap does catch it, and you have no choice in the matter, then cut the meat while it's still frozen into strips about one to two inches thick. Drop the frozen meat into boiling water, and cook until the red color of the raw meat almost disappears. Then pack the hot meat quickly into the cans, fill them up with the hot broth, and process in the steam pressure canner in the usual way. The point is, don't let the meat thaw out beforehand. In other words keep it frozen until you begin the canning.

I do hope my letter and Miss Stienbarger's directions for canning meat have reached our friend in Montana. We certainly wish her luck with that frozen beef. I guess there's been no chance for it to thaw out - not with the mercury itself almost frozen stiff.

Now, Mr. Salisbury, I have a confession to make to you. Lots of these letters I've been getting have messages for you about your part on the Farm and Home Hour.

MR. SALISBURY: Are you holding something out on me, Miss Van Deman?

MISS VAN DEMAN: No, not permanently. I was going to deliver them all in the course of time. But here's one I'd like to deliver in public. Here's a letter from a lady in Dayton, Ohio, that ends this way.

"Orchids to Morse Salisbury, And when you see Bill Coyle please tell him for me that he has a splendid radio personality and a grand voice".

MR. SALISBURY: The original orchid man speaking - and thanking our Dayton friend for the compliments-- on behalf of self and Bill Coyle.

###

